

Thu 21/05/26

Dear Colleagues,

Election implications

The Scottish Parliament and Welsh Senedd have seen considerable turnover in the MSPs and MSs who are representing constituencies with our centres in them. All of the constituency boundaries have also been changed.

In Scotland, the constituency MSP Kenny Gibson (SNP) was returned for Millport and has since been elected Presiding Officer. He is genuinely enthusiastic about our work and enjoyed attending the recent Royal Visit. The other 7 regional West Scotland seats returned 2 Reform, 2 Labour, 2 Green and 1 Conservative MSP. The Parliament has traditionally operated with minority government where deals are needed to get legislation through. One of the most important issues for us is that ministers sort out the funding to deliver the Schools Residential Outdoor Learning Act.

In Wales there has been an even larger change. Our 3 centres now have a total of 9 Plaid Cymru, 6 Reform, 2 Conservative and 1 Labour MS to represent them. The new First Minister Rhun ap Iorwerth represents the new constituency for Rhyd-y-Creiau which gives us the ideal reason to invite him to visit, especially as he wants to review the recently introduced Curriculum for Wales.

You can never second guess support for our work based on party politics. Outdoor learning advocates have come from across the political spectrum so we will be engaging with all of them.

David's Hike to the Highlands

I'm pleased to confirm that David Plant made it to Fort William on schedule and completed his West Highland Way fundraising challenge.

Thank you to everyone for the sponsorship and messages of support, he reported that they really kept him going on the hard days.

You can view all his [photos from the trip here](#). He took time to photograph as much nature as he could so there are lots of plants and wildlife to enjoy.

Youth Panel Member Celebrates Funding Success

Clark Pearce, a member of our Youth Panel, has been successful in securing £500 of funding from the Grow Wild Youth Grant programme, run by Kew Gardens. He has gained the funding to run nature-themed, educational art sessions with young people in Bristol parks, to celebrate UK native plants and fungi.

His aim is to connect children with nature in their local area through identification skills (with the use of Field Studies Council guides), creating natural art and further activities. He is hoping to gain additional support from The Children's Scrapstore, a charity in Bristol who reuse waste for children's art projects. As part of the project, he will be creating a Zine to showcase the children's artwork, which can hopefully be shared later this year.

Young Darwin Scholarship 2026

If you know anyone between the ages of 16-25 who might be interested in [applying for this year's Darwin Scholarship](#), please do share the information and note the closing date is coming up soon.

Pulse Survey – There is still time to have your say

The Staff Pulse Survey landed in inboxes on Monday, and we're pleased to see that 26% of you have already responded - thank you. A big thank you also to managers who have displayed the QR code in workplaces, making it easy for colleagues to take part using their phones.

If you haven't had a chance yet, there's still time - **the survey is open until 12pm on Friday 5th June.**

Royal Visit Photos

As promised, we've uploaded photos of the recent visit by our Patron the Princess Royal to Millport. We've picked just a few that give a flavour of the day in more or less the order in which things took place. These photos are for what the palace call "private use" - i.e. not for you to share on social media. There are lots of other photos of the day so if any of you who took part would like Joy to find them and share them with you, please contact her directly.  [Snapshot of the Royal Visit to Millport for Private Use Only](#)

Welcome to Field Studies Council

Victoria Dixon has joined the team at Rhyd-y-Creuau as Casual Hospitality and Catering Assistant.

Best regards

Mark